

Evangelical Christendom

"Unum
Corpus
sumus in
Christo."

March-April, 1916.

The Revival of the Prayer Meeting.*

It comes upon me, as I am certain it comes upon every true Christian also, every day, to think, What should we be in these appalling and heart-breaking times if it were not for the great privilege of real prayer? When we really pray, and throw our troubles at the Cross of Christ, there is a real steadying and staying and strengthening of the whole spiritual man. Thank God, we have a throne of grace to come to; and thank God if even this sharp discipline has taught us how to pray, and how to pray better, and how to pray more, and how to pray with such convinced and believing assurance that we know that we have the petitions which we ask of God. And the man of prayer will always find his way to the place of prayer. Thank God, the place of prayer is everywhere: "Where'er they seek Thee, Thou art found." But, for all that, the recognised and honoured place where God gathers His children together, and speaks to them, and they to Him, will always be the thankful home and the ambition of those who love prayer; the prayer spirit will lead men to the prayer meeting.

That reminds me of the fact, which is so true, that in all the long history of the Christian Church the prayer meeting has been the birthplace of the best things that the Church of God has ever witnessed. First of all, the Church was born in a prayer meeting, and the very best things that the Church has witnessed of a spiritual character have had their beginnings in gatherings of the Lord's people. Every revival has begun in a prayer meeting, and the full significance of everything that true, united, and believing prayer has accomplished in the Church of Christ will never be known till eternity discloses the wonderful secrets of Divine grace. The prayer meeting is the spiritual thermometer of the Church, and the prayer spirit is the spiritual thermometer and gauge of every Christian life.

Standing in front of this great gathering, all of you presumably the earnest people of God, I am reminded of that.

I am reminded, further, of the first prayer meeting that ever was held in the Christian Church, as it is described in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. It is interesting to notice—I cannot pass it by—that the first gathering of the Christian Church, when it was left to itself, after the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, was a prayer meeting. I do not read a word about it being a sacramental feast; it was a prayer meeting; and nothing less or more. When those Christians were, first of all, left to themselves, the first thing they did was to get



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Photo by W. & D. Downey.

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together in prayer in the "upper room." My friends, that is what we want to do to-day. We want a multiplication of these "upper rooms": and I venture to say to you this afternoon, if I may be so impertinent, Go home to your parishes, and to your churches and chapels, and if your minister has not got a prayer meeting, give him no peace till he has one.

You will hardly credit it, but there are scores and scores of churches and chapels in the Metropolitan area alone that have not anything that approaches to a prayer meeting of any kind. Go home to your minister, if he has not got one, and get him to start one at once. If he won't, then have an "upper room" in your own house, and meet there.

In connection with the thought that all the upper rooms in Eastern houses were not, like our upper rooms, the worst, but the best—"large upper room, furnished"—in connection with that thought, let me point out that those upper rooms were reserved for the best guests, and where they might be welcomed. I remember once hearing the late Dr. Parker, of the City Temple, preach on that subject, and parabolically press it home upon his congregation by saying: "Have you an upper room where you can receive your best Guest, where you can meet the King? Have you a bedside, or a chair, which you can turn into an altar, and He can transform into a throne; a crust that He can make a sacrament of, and clean water that, with one of His own smiles, he can turn into the wine of gladness to fill your hearts?" I say we want more of these "upper rooms" in which we can meet together for united and believing prayer than we have.

Another thing that this gathering reminds me of is what took place at that first prayer meeting. When you go home, read the fourteenth verse of the first chapter of Acts; there it is tersely described. I should like every prayer meeting in London to be on those lines, especially on two of them: first of all, the *attendance*, and, secondly, the *spirit*.

First of all, the attendance. Not that there were so many present; there were only one hundred and twenty. But then they were all there; there was not one absentee Christian. They are all mentioned. All the Apostles were there. There was not

one of the ministers told off to take the prayer meeting, the others to go where they liked; they were all there. And all the Christian women were there. And there is a sentence at the end which says the Christian men were there also. There was not an absentee.

Now just transfer that, as in a figure, to modern times, and see what would happen if the prayer meetings of to-day were like the prayer meetings of the apostolic days, and like the first prayer meeting that ever was held in the Christian Church. Just as every Apostle was there, so in our parochial prayer meetings every minister would be there; every Church leader would be there. If it is in a Dissenting chapel, all the deacons would be there. If it is in a Church of England place, all the churchwardens would be there. Fancy the thirty thousand churchwardens of England and Wales present at a prayer meeting every week! Why, the Church of England would not know herself! Take my own parish, my seventeen sidesmen; fancy them—many of whom have never been inside a prayer meeting—fancy them all being there, and half a dozen of them clamouring to take part! Every Sunday-school teacher, every business man, every working man present! That is what we want. We want the prayer meeting as it might be, the prayer meeting as it ought to be, the prayer meeting as it used to be; and then some of us ministers would not go about afterwards and say, "We had a nice little sprinkling to-night," but we should say, "We had the greatest gathering possible; they were all there sharing the burden, and lifting up their hearts to the Lord."

The other thing in which I should like the prayer meetings of to-day to be like the prayer meetings of that day is not only in respect of the attendance, but also in respect of the spirit. They were all there, and they were all "of one mind and one accord"; they were all in tune, they were all in sympathy, they were meeting together for a common purpose. And we want more unity of heart, and then we shall have more blessing. I am certain of it. If you want to injure the Church of Christ, if you want to destroy the work of God, if you want to close the pierced hands of your Lord, which are so full of blessing, throw a bombshell of disunion into your midst, or become a dividing source of trouble yourself; it is so

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easy, and you will accomplish the purpose. But the power and influence that are absolutely harnessed to unity of thought, and unity of prayer, and unity of action are wonderful.

One thing more. What would follow that kind of prayer meeting? What followed the first prayer meeting? I need not tell you. A Pentecost followed; a baptism of the Spirit followed; an outpouring of the Holy Ghost followed; the greatest promise that the New Testament contains was fulfilled, "Ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence," and the whole place was shaken, and all the people in it. They had new life, and the Apostles had new power, and God had new glory. I want—and you want—these things to occur to-day. Will they ever occur?

I ask myself sometimes, as I have no doubt you ask yourself, Will there ever be in our time a Pentecostal revival, such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit as occurred then? Yes, there will, if you can only revive the old spirit of expectation, and of prayer, and of unity.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is projecting a Mission to the Nation—a "Mission of Repentance and Hope." Every one of us, I am sure, will be in fullest sympathy with that effort. We are quite prepared to follow the Archbishop of Canterbury wherever he leads, wherever he is doing spiritual work. But I venture to say that what is wanted, first of all, is not a mission to the masses, not a mission to the people, but a mission to the Christian men and women of London, to stir them up. As to whether God Almighty is using missions to the masses or not, as He once did, I won't offer an opinion, though I have my own; but it does seem as if God's plan now is first of all to stir up His own people.

I will tell you what happened in my dining-room a year before that veteran mission-preacher, Mr. Haslam, went to his

rest. He was staying with me, and urging the point that I am urging now, namely, that the day of missions to the masses is for the moment past. It may return, he said, but before it does return there must be a mission to God's people. They want stirring, they want life, they want warmth of heart and a passion for souls, which so few, alas! seem to possess. He was speaking on these lines, and he said that, five years before, he was asked to go to a north country town to take a mission for an energetic clergyman who was vicar of one of the parishes. But when he went there were no spiritual results apparent, and there were certainly no conversions. After it was all over the vicar said to Mr. Haslam: "I thought that if you came the power of the Lord would be present to 'heal'; but it has not been so. How do you account for it?" Mr. Haslam replied: "I can easily account for it. I am not a bit surprised," he said. "Your people are not ready for it. God does not want any more Christians in the north of England like your people. They want stirring; and if you will let me spend a week with them, to stir up the people of God, you won't want me to come afterwards to stir up the masses, for they themselves will be home missionaries to the people."

That is what we must pray for. I hope my brethren won't resent it when I say you must pray for us who are ministers. We are in fault to a great extent. That is the reason why some of our churches are empty, and many are only half full. We want to ask God to search our hearts, and show us where the trouble is; and I am sure we are part of it. But if you pray that your ministers may be consecrated and anointed with the "holy oil," and fitted for their great work, and have given to them a passion for souls, then "in the wilderness," in the most unlikely places, under the most improbable ministries, "shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."

ALLEN T. EDWARDS.

"To invoke God, to appeal to God, to count on God—thus alone can we hope for the power to see and the energy to create that new way of life which Europe needs to-day."—*Selected.*

Notes.

Monday, May 1st.—The Alliance has the privilege this year of a place among the great Missionary and other Societies keeping their anniversaries during the first week of May. The Seventieth Annual Meeting will take place at the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, W., on Monday, May 1st, at 3 p.m. We express the hope of the Council that the occasion will be made the opportunity for all who can possibly arrange to be present, to join in praise for the accomplishments of the past and prayer for the hopes and aspirations of the future. Sir Andrew Wingate, K.C.I.E., will take the chair, and, in addition to other features (in keeping with the next Day of Intercession with which the meeting is associated), the Rev. R. C. Gillie, M.A., of Marylebone Presbyterian Church, will give a special address. At the close of the meeting a number of limelight pictures illustrating the foreign and missionary work of the Alliance will be exhibited by the General Secretary.

Announcement is also made that the Ordinary General Business Meeting (of members only) will be held at the registered offices of the Alliance, No. 19, Russell Square, London, W.C., at 2 p.m. on Thursday, April 27th, to receive the accounts and balance sheet and reports of the Executive Council and the Auditors; to elect the Honorary Officers and the General and Executive Councils; to appoint the Auditors, and fix their remuneration; and to transact any other ordinary business of the Association. This meeting is for the transaction of formal business only.

Laus Deo.—It is pleasing to be able to place on record that in entering upon the seventieth year of its existence, and after nearly two years of experience with sister Societies of the financial strain caused by the War, the Alliance closed its financial year on March 31st without a deficit. Better than this, a balance is carried forward. This favourable issue from another year's work, crowded with busy

activities, as the Report now in preparation will record, is cause for praise and thanksgiving. We believe the important mission of the Alliance in the direction of Christian Union and Co-operation is becoming patent to a wider circle of Christians, and while the future calls for faith and consecrated energy, we may all take courage. Let it be borne in mind that the present world catastrophe might have been averted if the Church had been more united and what she might have been? There is food for reflection in the statement which has been made in this country, and repeated in other countries, that "the failure of the Church is at the root of all our present trouble." We constitute an international Society, and in company with others, the mission of the Alliance during and after the War must be to contribute its share of influence to the establishment of such international relationships, based upon the principles of the Gospel of Christ, as may lead to fellowship and brotherhood in the home and foreign branches of the one Church of Christ, as well as among the Nations, and to the settlement of international suspicions and disputes by arbitration rather than by the sword. The important mission of the World's Evangelical Alliance, in all its departments, calls for an increase of enthusiasm, generosity, and prayer.

"Towards Christian Unity."—The title which was chosen for the successful Alliance Conference, held in the City of Liverpool last October, has been attached to a statement on matters concerning "Faith and Order," recently issued by Christian leaders of various Church denominations in this country. We had something to say in our last issue concerning the proposed "World Conference on Faith and Order," the origin of which is America, and its machinery so elaborate that it is difficult at present for some to realise what practical usefulness the Conference, if held, can

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contribute to spiritual unity. It frankly recognises and promotes co-operation with the Roman and Greek Churches, and the letter from the Pope read at the Garden City Conference is evidence of the credulity of some well-meaning Christians in their aspirations after reunion. A preliminary examination of the statement referred to appears on another page. The Alliance sympathises with every genuine effort towards Christian unity, and exists to help forward in any and every possible way the fulfilment of our Lord's intercessory prayer, "that they all may be one." It is opposed, however, to any religious system or combination of systems which either do not represent the full Gospel of Christ, or misrepresent it by accretions which involve sacerdotal or sacramentarian pretensions. Nothing is more needed than a "World Conference on Faith and Order" based upon the twin principles of the supremacy of the Holy Scriptures and the right and duty of private judgment in their interpretation, and carried forward in the spirit of the motto, "In things essential, unity; in things non-essential, liberty; in all things, charity." But an admixture of true and false unity can only lead to disunion rather than unity, and it would be well if some earnest people, only too willing to give their names to every good cause, would realise that in the matter of Christian union there are some elements which will not coalesce, and were never intended to.

United National Prayer for the War.—

The series of monthly meetings at the Queen's Hall are creating a profound impression. The attendances, both morning and afternoon, have been very large. At the April meetings there were over 2,000 present at the morning meeting, and in the afternoon the hall was crowded. This is an encouraging fact. The history of the War will no doubt include the services of the Alliance in the initiation of this movement, and its valuable contribution to the Nation's righteous cause. Plans for an extension of the movement in the autumn to other metropolitan centres are under consideration. In the meantime provincial meetings are transpir-

ing. A memorable Day of Intercession, arranged by the Alliance, was held at Hove on March 24th, the Mayor presiding at the afternoon meeting. A similar Day of Intercession is being arranged in the Town Hall, Eastbourne, the date being May 18th. The movement has the hearty co-operation of local clergy, ministers, and laymen, including the Mayor of Eastbourne, who will preside at the afternoon meeting.

The Prime Minister and the Pope.—

When an ambassador was appointed to the Vatican Italy was not our ally. Patriotism kept silent very many who were wounded because England had for the first time since the Reformation sent an official representative to the Papal Court. They saw the grounds for the mission, but did not think them sufficient to warrant a surrender of principle. History will tell us whether we have gained or lost by the presence of Sir Henry Howard in Rome. Certainly the Pope has shown no fuller appreciation of the moral grounds on which we conduct the War, and the Curia has not ceased to be pro-German. Italy is now our ally. The Prime Minister visited Rome officially, and in accordance with diplomatic precedent he called upon the Pope. The Law of Guarantees enabled him to do this without in any way affronting the Quirinal, and not to do so would have been a repudiation of the ambassador to the Vatican. We know nothing of what passed during the twenty minutes' interview. Mr. Asquith knows better than most people the facts that lie at the root of the breach of diplomatic relations in the past, and is aware that the present ambassador has only a temporary post—"for the duration of the War." We do not wish to discuss now what is at stake in this reopening of relations between England and the Vatican: this is not the time for criticism; but remembering the history of the Evangelical Alliance, we cannot pass over the Premier's visit in silence, and must place on record our conviction that it is one of the unfortunate effects of a step which has given pain to many of the best and most loyal of English Christians.

THE NATION AND THE WAR

A Form of Prayer

FOR PRIVATE USE, OR FOR GUIDED INTERCESSION
AT PUBLIC UNITED PRAYER MEETINGS.

(Used at the Queen's Hall Meetings.)

An Act of Homage.

Low at Thy feet we gather, O God, as we bring to Thee our lauds and our litanies. In ourselves we have not that which Thou demandest, but we seek the aid of Thy good Spirit to help our infirmities, and because none seek in vain.

We humbly adore Thee.

We come with the assurance that Thou who hast redeemed the world through Jesus Christ art supreme among the nations; that Thou doest as Thou wilt in the armies of Heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth; and because Thou art never taken unaware, never baffled, never unmindful of Thine own,

We humbly adore Thee.

Worlds on worlds are hanging on Thine hand, life and death are waiting Thy command, yet hast Thou regard to the humble, and savest such as be of a contrite spirit. Because Thou hast called us here to Thy throne, hast given us access in the Blessed Name, and now regardest us in love,

We humbly adore Thee.

As a father pitieth his children, Thou dost pity us; as a mother comforteth, Thou dost comfort. Thy love is as great as Thy power, and neither knows measure nor end. Because of Thy tenderness toward us in all our sorrow and failure, O Lord,

We humbly adore Thee.

Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

An Act of Thanksgiving.

Together we desire to thank Thee for Thy grace to each one of us, for Thy salvation, Thy providence, Thy gifts, Thy discipline, Thy ministers:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

For Thy holy Church throughout all the world, for the holy dead, for all those who in these dread hours are finding their way to Thy side:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

For the land of our birth, the Empire of our inheritance, the memory of our sires, and the hope of our sons:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

For the great age in which Thou hast cast our lot, for the whole world awake, for the thoughts that tremble in men's minds, and the desires that throb in their hearts:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

For Thy guidance and help which led us, all unworthy as we are, to champion the cause of the weak, to love honour more than ease, to sacrifice life for liberty, and treasure for truth:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

For Thy signal help in the day when we were almost overwhelmed, for Thy mercy when we failed, Thy patience when we boasted, and Thy favour in the day of fear:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

For the upraising of our kin across the sea, for the loyal heart of India, for the reform in Russia, and for the lofty spirit of all our allies:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

For the millions that have flocked to the flag, for the men and women who have gone forth to succour them, for the willing spirit of the people at home, and for those who minister the Word of Life in the midst of the struggle:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

For shores untouched by foot of foeman, for the stream of prayer rising day and night to Thy throne, for the sympathy of neutral nations, and for the hope that God will bruise Satan under our feet shortly:

We praise Thee, O Lord.

Unto Him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory, and majesty, dominion, and power, both now and for ever. Amen.

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An Act of Confession.

That Thy Church has lost its corporate witness, that we have been ensnared by our civilisation and philosophies, that we have so often gloried in our shame and trusted in our riches : *Oh, forgive us, gracious Saviour.*

That so often we have lived lives that are profane, forgetting the Sabbath of the Lord, which should have sanctified all other days; the family of the Lord, which should have beautified all other relationships; and the Book of the Lord, which should have ennobled all other literature : *Oh, forgive us, gracious Saviour.*

That our hearts, not fully knowing Thee, have often faltered; and our eyes, not clearly seeing Thee, have often been weary; that in the haughtiness of our minds we have sought to be independent of Thee, who art our only Helper and Defence : *Oh, forgive us, gracious Saviour.*

That we have despised and hated those whom we oppose; that we have given place to wrath and bitterness; that we have returned railing for railing, and scorn for scorn : *Oh, forgive us, gracious Saviour.*

That there has been uncharity in our zeal, intolerance in our devotion, impatience in our endeavour, and listlessness in our service : *Oh, forgive us, gracious Saviour.*

Unto Him who loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us to be a kingdom and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

An Act of Intercession.

We implore Thy blessing on our beloved King and Queen, on all who guide and influence public affairs, on the Admirals of the Fleet, and the Generals of the Army. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

For our Soldiers and Sailors, for those at sea or in the trenches, for those whose perilous service is in the air or on the deep, and for those in camp and in training. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

For the War lands, Belgium and France, Poland and Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Persia and Armenia, we pray. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

For the wounded and the dying, for those who mourn their dead or taste the more bitter sorrow of uncertainty, and for those in captivity and bondage, we entreat Thy comfort. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

We pray for the "Allies, that, kept true to the sacred cause they have undertaken, and to each other, they may in Thy mercy be also true to Thee. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

And as Thou hast taught us to pray for those that spitefully use us, we ask that Germany may be humbled at Thy feet, that Austria may be requited for her ways, that Bulgaria may know Thy faithfulness to wound and to heal, and that Turkey the destroyer may have its power destroyed. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

That, in the fateful months that are now upon us, there may be a steadying of purpose that shall keep us from flinching when the sword smites deep, and a strengthening of courage that shall enable us to endure to the end. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

That those we love may have their heads covered in the day of battle, that they may behave themselves bravely, that they may be delivered from the wrath of men, and, according to Thy will, restored to us again. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

That victory may soon be granted to us; that the eyes of Thy servants may be gladdened by the advent of peace; that those who are worsted in the fight may be blessed in their defeat; that those who win may not be destroyed by their victory; and that the day of Christ may soon dawn on the world of darkness. *Hear us, we beseech Thee, O Lord.*

And now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, unto all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

Glory be unto the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

"Towards Christian Unity."

A preliminary examination of the recent statement by Christian leaders on matters concerning Faith and Order.

EVERY approach to a fuller comprehension of our Lord's prayer that "they all may be one" is to be hailed as a proof of the working of the Holy Spirit of God. There is false unity as well as true, and when we observe a unity based on error we may be sure that the human factor has been introduced to frustrate the will of God. Many a noble dream has been shattered by the inability of unregenerate nature to pursue high ends by right means. The power that control of a unified Church gives has been more desired than oneness of spirit. Exclusiveness may be the child of unity in opposition to the comprehensiveness of the Gospel of Christ. The history of the Church is full of the sad narratives of great endeavours after unity being overthrown by men imagining that the will of God must fit in with their ideals. In spite of past failures Christians yearn for unity, and the Church of Christ can never rest until in the presence of the world it shows itself to be one in all that is essential and united in a common bond of love and truth.

The preparation for the World Conference on Faith and Order has given rise already to notable occurrences. It has proved that the Papacy will never consent to discuss Christian unity except on the basis of the absolute surrender of all outside its border of their consciences to its control. Rome is unchanged. It cannot reform or abate its claims without committing suicide, and the defeated hopes of those who look to Rome to retrace its steps and to stand on the firm base of apostolic Christianity, are a lesson that still requires to be learned by many whose enthusiasm outruns their judgment and whose false catholicity blinds their eyes to the plain teaching of history. In all schemes of Christian unity Rome stands by itself in a proud solitariness, declaring to the world that "outside the Church there is no salvation, and the Church which alone secures salvation is the Holy Catholic Roman and Apostolic Church." This is now clear to the advocates of reunion who have not wrapped themselves in a mantle of idealistic prejudice. We may admire their cravings, but we cannot commend their sense. The Branch Committee appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to work in co-operation with the Conference

has nominated a sub-committee, consisting of five Anglicans, who were joined by five Free Churchmen chosen by the Nonconformist Commission, to draw up "propositions alike of agreement and of difference." The members of the Committee are alone responsible for the opinions expressed, and the statement is not in any way to be considered a creed for subscription, but only a plain setting forward of substantial agreement and a starting point for further consideration. When it is remembered that the Committee included men like the Bishop of Oxford and the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare, it is clear that any deliverance made by it must be considered of more than average importance.

As was to be expected, there was complete agreement on the fundamentals of the Faith. The main doctrinal points of the revelation of the Gospel are fully accepted. The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, "both in their statements of historical fact and in their statements of doctrine, affirm essential elements of the Christian Faith as contained in Scripture which the Church could never abandon without abandoning its basis in the Word of God." Miracles are frankly accepted as in accord with the facts we learn from nature and the historical evidence, "candidly and impartially investigated by critical methods." We are thankful for this, as it shows no desire to attribute importance to the rationalistic speculations that are current among thinkers who are considered to be trustworthy students of science and history. A non-miraculous Christianity is a contradiction in terms, and it is well that this should be recognised by all Christian teachers. We have had a great deal too many treatises endeavouring to reconstruct Christianity on the subjective basis of what writers think it ought to be, instead of what it historically is. Deprive Christianity of its historical basis and it becomes one among many philosophical religions that have their day and cease to be.

We are told that the Word of God is "contained in" the Old and New Testaments, and constitutes the permanent spiritual value of the Bible. Behind the words "contained in" may lurk interpretations that are not in accord with Christian verity. The Bible is the revelation of God to man. It is a pro-

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gressive revelation, and has permanent value in all its parts. It is the Word of God, and the only supreme guide to doctrinal Truth and to holy living. Take away any part of it and it becomes a mutilated book. We may be met with the criticism that long lists of names and minor details are not of great value. In one sense that is true, but they have their worth as clues to the working of the Providence that has presided over the history of the chosen people. Just as the law had its well-assigned place in the development of the preparation for the coming of the Saviour, so have many things that in our present manner of life seem to be unimportant. The great stream of Divine life that flowed through the history of the Hebrew nation can never be forgotten by those who remember that the Bible of our Lord and the apostles was the Old Testament canon which we possess and value. For our part we see as many difficulties in the assertion that the Bible "contains" the Word of God as in the statement that "the Bible is the Word of God." We are aware of the controversy that lies behind the use of the two phrases, and do not desire to abandon the old without better reasons than those usually given for the acceptance of the new.

We pass now to the consideration of matters of Order, and we are not in the least surprised to find the signatories accepting the visibility of the Church "which in every age should maintain the communion of saints in the unity of the Spirit, and should be capable of a common witness and a common activity." It is also in accordance with expectation to find a declaration that our Lord ordained the sacraments of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper "as not only declaratory symbols, but also effective channels of His grace and gifts for the salvation and sanctification of men." The sacraments are also rightly declared to be social ordinances affirming "the obligation of corporate fellowship as well as individual confession of Him." The Divine institution of the Christian ministry is also affirmed "in its manifold gifts and functions to maintain the unity and continuity of its (the Church's) witness and work."

We have only to say in criticism of this part of the declaration that, if it implies that the sacraments "are effective gifts for the salvation and sanctification of men" in any *ex opere operato* sense without lively faith, then the teaching is not in accord with the message of the New Testament; and it is strange that in a document signed by men like Dr. W. T. Davison, Dr. Eugene Stock, and Dr. J. Scott Lidgett that no mention is made of "justification by faith," which is written large on the pages of the New Testament. This strange omission is the most remarkable feature of

the entire declaration, and is not entirely rectified by the statement of differences in relation to "matters of Order which require further study and discussion." These are the nature of the visible Church, the conditions "objective and subjective in the ministration and reception of the sacraments on which their validity depends," and the authority of the ministry "whether it is derived through an episcopal or a presbyteral succession, or through the community of believers, or through a combination of these."

Let it be said at once that on the points of agreement in matters of Faith and Order, the report goes no further than the Romanists and the Reformers would have gone in the sixteenth century. The leaders of the Reformation movement held just as strongly as any orthodox body to-day the historical Christian revelation, the supremacy of the Bible as the Word of God, the visibility of the Church, and the place of the sacraments and the ministry in the life of the Church. If challenged, we can produce from their confessions and writings words that can be paralleled with those of the declaration, and it is a grave mistake to assert that the Reformers abandoned the doctrine of a visible Church by their insistence on the invisibility of the Church known to God but unperceived by men in its inner union with Him. The Helvetic Confession of 1566 says: "The Church militant upon earth has always existed under the form of particular Churches, which, however, are all connected with each other by their common relation to the one Catholic Church. The latter is termed in Scripture the house of the living God, built of living and spiritual stones upon the rock of Christ." The Confessions dwelt upon the grace received from faithful reception of the sacraments, and even the theory known as Zwinglian is nowadays considered not to have been held by that Reformer. There is in reality no advance upon Reformation teaching on these points in the new declaration. The leaders of the Reformation movement as well as their successors in England and on the Continent would gladly have affirmed its principles.

When we come to the statement of difference we are at once faced by the fundamental differences that divided the Church of Rome from the Evangelical Churches. It is a striking fact that these differences should exist to-day among those separated from the Church of Rome who are the direct heirs of the teaching of the Reformers. During the past seventy years there has emerged a school of thought that has done much to revolutionise the outlook of the Church of England, and to revert to mediæval conceptions of the Church. Everything depends on the concep-

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tion of the Church. Evangelicalism has always made the relation of the individual to the Church dependent on his relation to Christ; the Church of Rome makes his relation to Christ depend on his relation to the Church. Evangelicalism makes the fact that a man united by faith to Christ constitutes him a member of the Church. Rome insists on membership of the Church of Rome as a necessary preliminary to membership of the body of Christ. In the former case union by faith with Christ determines Church membership, in the latter the Church makes the Christian. The mediating Church stands in the foreground of the teaching against which the Reformers protested. It had its machinery of salvation and its hierarchy that was essential for the maintenance of the Christian life. Only through the ministrations of its priesthood could salvation be obtained, and outside the Church there is no salvation. The Reformers proclaimed the return to Holy Scripture, and made salvation depend on trust in the Saviour, and in the promises of the Gospel; it is the work of God—the response to faith in the redeeming work of His Son. It is essentially a personal matter depending on the relation between the individual soul and God, and does not need the mediation of any official caste chosen in a special way with a special succession to guarantee the bestowal of grace. There is a freedom about the New Testament that contrasts with the mechanical conception of the Church and its ministry that made the Reformers separate from Rome and fall back upon the message of Holy Scripture.

The entire point of conflict on the character of the Church in the days of the Reformation lay in the contention by the Romanists that the Presence of the Holy Spirit depended on and was posterior to the visible organisation of the Church, with its various orders of ministry derived in a definite way direct from God. The Reformers held, with unmistakable emphasis, that the visibility of the Church depended on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and souls of its members and

manifesting itself in their works as individuals and as a corporate body. The Church is not for Evangelicals a body like a kingdom with certain supernatural powers attached to it, differentiating it in this respect from earthly kingdoms, in order that it may train and discipline members, but a body to whose members the Word has been preached for the salvation of their souls that are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and to whom the sacraments are administered in obedience to the command of Christ.

The reconciliation of these conflicting views was found impossible in the sixteenth century. They still remain in opposition, and there seems to be no way by which they can be brought together as agreeable to the Word of God. Those who have founded their faith on the teaching of Holy Writ are convinced that the Church of Christ has no sacerdotal caste, and that it is marked by freedom from the Judaistic tendencies against which St. Paul fought. Unity can never be achieved by ignoring fundamental differences, and now in the twentieth century we are brought face to face with the old problems raised by the Reformation. True, among members of the Committee we have not Roman Catholics claiming the temporal and sole ecclesiastical power asserted by the Popes in the sixteenth century. These were excrescences on the real source of the differences—the contrast between the Church as conceived by our Lord and the apostles and the Church as developed by the mediæval teachers, who gave it the character now claimed for it by one set of the signatories to the report. As long as there is agreement on matters of faith that are of primary importance, and an absence of any spirit of exclusiveness, there is hope of our reaching a common platform if we are all desirous of following the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the message of Holy Scripture. Meanwhile, it is for those who are "one in Christ" to seek by every means to draw closer together and to show the world that in the unity of the Spirit they live in the brotherhood of those who hold the Truth in love.

T. J. PULVERTAFT.

"We too often forget that the duty to labour for the extension of the Kingdom is as incumbent on each of us as the elementary virtues of Christian life, and in my humble opinion we shall never rise to the highest standard in the performance of that obligation until we reach a greater unity of common action than has been attained for centuries in the history of the Christian Church."—*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*

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The Bright Side of the War in France.*

By Rev. Dr. Reuben Saillens.

As I came on this platform, just for one moment I was in doubt whether the flag which covers the Chairman's table was French or English. As my head was bowing down I only saw the blue, white, and red; but on reflection and observation I noticed that the colours were not arranged in the same way as our own three colours. But that is the only difference. We fight under the same colours. I never felt more at home in England than I have done these last few days. In France we are with heart and soul, as well as with flesh and blood, in the same struggle for the same ideals and for the same ends. We do not represent several nations, but we represent Christendom in its highest and most beautiful sense. We are the civilised part of humanity fighting against the uncivilised part of humanity. I believe there has never been a meeting in the world, in the history of the world, so solemn, so great, so rich in possibilities, so majestic, as the meeting of last week, with representatives of England and France. I am proud it was in Paris that they met. Russia was there too, and Servia, and, last but not least, Belgium. Altogether those diplomats, among whom I believe there were at least one or two real Christian men, represented more than half of the whole human race. You may say they represented nine-tenths of whatever is good and noble and great in the human race. I for one wonder that all the civilised nations did not send their representatives around that green table. Who can stand out and be neutral in such a struggle as this? I try not to be a partisan, although I do not pretend to be impartial. You cannot be impartial to your own mother when she is assaulted; you cannot be impartial when the greatest interests of your heart and life are in question. I am partial to my country. God gave me France for my Mother, and I must be loyal to her, and it can only be at the last extreme that I shall be willing to say anything harsh or hard against my beloved country. We are discovering our own country. I must confess my sin towards France. I had doubted her—doubted that she had in her still noble stamina to resist such an enemy as this; doubted that there was still left in her something living of that great Gospel which was brought to our shores fifteen centuries ago—for we are the oldest evangelised country of Europe. Apart from Syria and Rome, there is no more sacred city in the world than Lyons, where in

177 A.D. some two or three hundred Christian men were done to death. Lyons is a holy city, and France is a holy country just now.

Dear friends, continue to pray for France. I thank you for having given her a place to-day in this great meeting. When you pray for England put also the continent of Europe in your prayers. Whatever may be in the future, the soil of France will be sacred to you. There are more graveyards of Englishmen in France to-day than ever there were before; and whatever you do in the future our women shall care for those graves and put flowers upon them.

But what I am most concerned about in this war is that we shall be up to the mark as Christian people. I am not anxious about the national conscience. I believe your country is rising up, perhaps a little too slowly, but still it is now rising up to its duty. Our men are all gone, and we have no half-hearted feeling that perhaps they are doing work which we can hardly present to God for blessing. And so these men deserve all the sacredness and heartiness of our prayers. Unless their work is holy we have no business to pray for them. Their work is holy, and therefore we must pray for them as for our missionaries.

It is a pity such warfare has to be waged. It might have been spared if the Church had been what she ought to have been. If we had done right at the right time; if we had gained the right hand at the right time; if we Christians had consented to be mutilated for the Lord's sake, our men would not have been mutilated to-day. But as we have been unfaithful to the law of grace, the law must now have its turn; as we have not kept properly to the New Testament, the Old Testament has its turn. Therefore we must be loyal to our men, and support them with all our might and all our prayers. Our nations will be all right as far as this war is concerned. There is a proper spirit of nobility and heroism, courage, devotedness, and sacrifice. But what about the Church? It seems to me that the failure of the Church is at the bottom of all our present trouble. If we had been the international society, the miraculous God-given international power that we should have been, this war would not have been possible. If we had had the broad spirit of Christ, if we had been consecrated and crucified, we should not have allowed such a thing as this war to happen. You will remember that a Man left this world, after He was risen again, and said, "All power is given unto Me." And He said, "Where two of you agree together, whatever they ask of Me it shall be done." He left us a tremendous

* Address given at the Queen's Hall, London, W., on Monday morning, April 3rd, 1916.

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power. We have not used it. Even now we are afraid of using it. Even now it seems there is not that harmony of heart and that full faith in the all-powerful Christ that would prevent this war from going on much longer.

I do believe that if in every house of Christian people there were a consecrated spirit of prayer and supplication and sacrifice, if we knew how to assemble ourselves as we do to-day, but also in other ways, by twos or threes in the villages and towns; and if in every neighbourhood and street there were a powerful, deep spirit of humiliation and repentance, if there were a breaking down, if there were a death, so to speak, from that death a new Church would rise again, and she would repeat the words of her Master, "All power is given unto Me." Let us come to the fact of the case. We are the greatest power on earth—not England, not France, not Germany. The greatest power on earth is prayer, and we have the power for the Lord's sake. I wanted a text to read at the beginning of my address. I read it now: "Except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved." You see it is going to be very hard. No flesh shall be saved if the days are not shortened. "But for the elect's sake the days shall be shortened." It depends upon us to shorten the days. It depends upon our prayers, not perfunctory prayer. It depends on the spirit of consecration in the prayer. There should be a kind of spirit like that which our men have in the trenches—giving all. Not comfortably seated between the breakfast hour and lunch, not looking at our watches lest, perhaps, our lunch should be delayed; but that spirit which says, "I will not let Thee go until Thou bless me"; a spirit which will say, "O God, Thou hast given us a mission. It is for us to shorten the days. We will shorten the days if we have to lengthen our prayers until midnight." Shall we ask that spirit of prayer may be poured down upon us?

There are people in France praying to-day—not so many as you have here. You have less men at the front than we have; but you have more praying people in this country than we have. Nevertheless, in my country the Lord has touched the hearts of a very large number of people. I know to-day of meetings being held in different parts of France. During the last few months we have been able to organise more than one hundred meetings of two, five, ten, or fifteen people who have pledged themselves to gather together once a week in private houses to pray for the Church of God more than for the world. Somehow we feel that prayer must be for the Church of God before it is for the world; for if the Church were all right everything would be all right.

You will want to know, in the short time that is left me, what the Lord is doing in the trenches. I do not want you to go away with the impression that our men are being converted by the hundred and thousand. They are very much, many of them, as they were before. Still, there is a new spirit among them, there is a spirit of respect for religious things that did not exist before. The men receive the Gospels that are given to them, and in many cases these Gospels are treasured and read, and never was the demand for Holy Scriptures among our people as great as it has been during the last few months. We have more than that. We have real accounts of conversion, by the grace of God, among our soldiers. A little while ago I heard this story. One of our Christian soldiers was singing, as he went along to his work, a hymn very well known in our war now—"Nearer, my God, to Thee." It has become familiar through the great *Titanic* catastrophe. When he was singing that hymn in barracks or in camp the men laughed at him. But one day his company was told out for dirty work in the trenches. It was, indeed, a hard time. The shells were raining down upon them, and one after another was killed, and the few remaining had found some kind of shelter in a corner of the trench. One of the ringleaders of Freethought in that company said to my friend, "Now is the time for you to sing that hymn. Sing us the hymn of the *Titanic*." My friend sang the hymn in the trench, and they joined in, and before they were finished they were all able to sing it with him. So you see the Lord's work is being done.

One other incident. In one of the prisoners' camps in Germany there is a young man who was going to be ordained when the war broke out. He had intended to be a missionary for our French Missionary Society on the Congo. But the war came, and he was made prisoner. For fifteen months he has been a prisoner in that camp, and he holds a preaching service every Sunday, not only for the few Protestant soldiers in the camp, but for many outsiders—Roman Catholics or Freethinking men who come to listen to him. He says, "I have as many as fifty or sixty. There are some men who would not talk to each other when they came into this camp, but who now have prayer among themselves. On Christmas Day we had celebration of the Lord's Supper, and those who participated included two generals, one Belgian and the other French, also several Roman Catholics, who, without being asked, partook of the Lord's Supper in testimony of their newly found faith. Thus the Lord's work is being done in France, and I beg that you will ever remember France in your prayers.

The Reunion Outlook.

Notes and Comments.

The "We consent to call the Centrality of Cross the centre of our faith, the Cross. and yet we rather recognise it as the classic sacrifice than to realise it as the moral crisis of history; the point where God and man, time and eternity, past and future, nature and conscience, judgment and grace meet for a new creation." Dr. Forsyth in these words admirably depicts the defect of modern theology. The Cross has been crowded out of the pulpit through the failure to perceive its real meaning. Sacrifice is noble; but sacrifice does not carry with it salvation. Much of the loose thinking of the day is due to degradation of the message of Calvary to a mere exhibition of voluntary submission to sacrifice in behalf of a high ideal. Therefore all who surrender themselves to any end nobler than the gratification of personal satisfaction partake of "the sacrifice of the Cross" and bear the same Cross the Saviour bore. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Cross of Christ is unique; it was the occasion on which our Saviour made atonement for our sins. His death was not that of a mere hero, it was the willing death of the Son of God to accomplish that which could not be carried through by no other means. The great text, "the Son of Man came not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for ever," is as true to-day as when our Lord uttered it. The mystery of that atoning sacrifice cannot be fully unveiled in human language—it can be appropriated by the heart and grasped by faith. It is at once the message of salvation and the inspiration to high endeavour. No man who knows its power can ever afterwards think lightly of sin or fail to place his trust in God to enable him to live as God would have him live. It is the regenerative source of the new life as well as the path that leads a man to be in Christ and to dwell in Him by faith. Nothing else will satisfy the deepest

needs of human nature, and as Churches and individuals return to the Cross they will know more of the real message He came to teach mankind.

The Cross and Present-day Problems. We are all perplexed and puzzled. We cannot see our way clearly through the many perplexities forced on us by the events of the War. It is so easy to ask questions, and the answers given are generally the darkening of counsel with words. It would be much better if Christian teachers confessed that they had no definite reply to the queries made by honest minds, for the responses given are so open to criticism that they are no help whatever, and only raise new perplexities. The Christian who knows the story of Redemption does not find himself without helpful hope. He remembers the death of the Son of God. He knows that the Saviour lived in fullest communion with the Father and came to earth to do the will of Him that sent Him. Yet He cried the words that are to many the most mysterious in the whole Gospel, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and the more we meditate upon them, the deeper their meaning is to each one of us. It seems almost incomprehensible that under any circumstances the Saviour should deem Himself "forsaken" by God. In Gethsamene He cried in solemn loneliness, "Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done," and we know that He was strengthened to undergo the cruel trial and death. Yet He spoke the words that implied He was forsaken by God. This, however, was not the end. He commended His Spirit to God, who was His Father, and by so doing showed that He was not forsaken by God. In days such as we are passing through the soul of man is saddened and disturbed. Too often it has to say to the Lord, "Lord,

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I believe, help Thou mine unbelief," and by meditation on the transaction on Calvary light is shed in the darkness and hope is born from despair. The more we make the Cross the very centre of all our theology, the very core of our religion, and the constant subject of our meditation, the better for our faith and staying power in the midst of the tribulations we are called to endure in days when the very heaven seems to be brass. We can then trust, and not be afraid.

Sunday Labour. The War is teaching us many lessons, and not the least important is the impossibility of any man or woman maintaining full industrial efficiency and working seven days a week. Staleness, discontent, nerviness, and exhaustion all follow from the violation of the Divine law. Many who had worked seven days a week now are compelled by their employers to work only six, as the quality and quantity of the six days' output are superior to those of the seven. It is sad to recall the number of Sunday-school teachers and others employed in munition areas who were compelled, as they imagined by patriotic motives, to labour seven days a week. They were uneasy in their minds, for conscience spoke loudly to them. They return to their normal Sundays ashamed of what they did, but convinced that the Sabbath ordained for man is an institution that must be maintained, if the best that can be is to be yielded by the devotion of all their strength and talent to their daily toil. It is very easy when once the habit of Sunday observance has been dropped to slip into Sunday desecration. The reason is simple. Men and women live in an environment that does not foster the attendance upon the house of God and the regard for His laws. Christianity is not the easy matter many conceive it to be. It is the religion of freedom, because man is only really free when his mind and will are in accord with the mind and will of God. "Our wills are ours to make them Thine." Sunday is an imperishable boon. It was given to man by God, and all who desire to see the will of God faithfully practised in human life must of necessity do all in their power to restore to England her Christian Sunday. Man needs it, God demands it, and surely the union of the human need with the Divine law gives an unanswerable ground for our

insisting that all who value the positive teaching of the Bible should labour to guard over Sundays against desecration.

Sunday Cinemas. Cinemas are not all bad. They appear, however, to have adopted a lower type of film during recent months. We are not surprised that many excellent Christians find it impossible to sympathise with those who even occasionally attend an exhibition. "Do you like pictures?" a London clergyman said to a young friend from the country who had a few hours to spare in the metropolis. "I do not think so, sir," was the surprising reply. His friend was about to suggest his spending the time in a picture gallery; the young man had identified the only pictures on exhibition with those shown on the screen. No Christian zealous for the maintenance of Christian morality can view without serious concern the opening of picture palaces on Sunday, and the dishonesty associated with the so-called allocation of profits to charity. So great has the scandal become that the London County Council thought at one time of placing them under the control of the National Sunday League, an organisation that exists for the secularisation of the Lord's Day. It seems that all kinds of schemes were devised for so arranging Sunday expenses that they bore a large portion of the cost of the week-day entertainments, and by so doing enabled the proprietors to retain a very large proportion of the proceeds under the guise of expenses! It is always the case. Compromise on matters of principle, the desire to secure an easy conscience, and at the same time violate the sanctity of Sunday, will inevitably lead to further perplexities. No one can say there is need for Sunday pictures, and no one who knows the character of the exhibitions will assert that the films shown are invariably of an elevating type. We hope that those who have consistently opposed the Sunday shows will continue their opposition, not merely for the sake of the public at large, but especially for the sake of the employees who are deprived of their weekly day of rest.

"The National Mission." The Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England, with the approval of Convocation, have announced "a National Mission of Repentance and Hope," to be

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held in October and November. The methods of appeal to be adopted and the general character of the Mission are still unknown. A central committee will give general guidance, and numerous diocesan committees will make local arrangements. The whole organisation of the Church of England is being brought into the service of the Mission arrangements, and we are witnessing something unique in the history of that Church. It remains to be seen whether organisation will be the instrument of the Spirit of God, or whether it will be utilised to strangle that individual freedom which is the marked characteristic of all past revivals. On one point no man can doubt. The Archbishop of Canterbury is in earnest. He realises the need; his heart is heavy; his outlook is governed by a deep sense of the seriousness of the times and the call of God. But is the Mission a National Mission? The National Church gives the lead. It is not the only Church in the country. Its ministrations do not reach the whole Christian community. A correspondence between non-Episcopal leaders of religion and the Archbishop of Canterbury proves the deep interest taken by them in the effort and their earnest desire to see it accompanied by Divine blessing. Something more is needed than the courtesies of letter-writing. We can understand that, as long as the plans of the Church of England are nebulous, hesitation to commit themselves to a simultaneous mission is not unnatural. All do not think alike as to the suitability of the date. These are details. What we should like to see is a great spontaneous movement in the Free Churches, leading them to renewed efforts to evangelise the nation.

Lessons from History. Attention has lately been directed to three revivals in the Church, the Franciscan, the "Poor Brethren" (Dominican), and the Wesleyan. It is remarkable that, whereas the Church of Rome captured and diverted into other channels the former movements, the last named found its greatest expression outside the Church, where it was born. The Franciscan Order gave birth to the Jesuits, and through them to the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and Papal Infallibility. The Dominicans will always be notorious for their connection with the

Spanish Inquisition. On the other hand, the Wesleyan communion is the largest Church in the Anglo-Saxon world. The Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States has alone 6,000,000 members, as contrasted with the 2,250,000 communicants of the Church of England. The marvellous growth and extension of Methodism is the outstanding fact of the Anglo-Saxon religious movement of the last century and a half. It well deserves serious attention, and the secret of its power is not far to seek. The social customs of Methodism and the closeness of the ties that bind the members together are the expression of inward grace. As we read history, Wesleyanism had its origin in a great yearning to spread spiritual holiness throughout England, and it found its whole inspiration in Holy Scripture. Its re-discovery of the central doctrine of the witness of the Spirit and its stress on experimental religion gave it force. Anyone who reads Wesley's Fifty-three Sermons and his "Notes on the New Testament," largely founded as they are on Bengel's "Gnomon," will find that the marrow of Methodism is the simple Evangelical faith of the New Testament.

A United Free Church. The War is responsible for one of the most striking ecclesiastical developments of modern times. The Free Church Council has avowedly failed to accomplish what its founders hoped. Much has been done; more has been left undone. It is unofficial and unrepresentative in the true sense. There was a deep yearning for a deeper unity and a better co-ordination of Free Church Christianity. The dissipation of effort through overlapping was evident to all. Villages maintain two "denominational" Churches, when one half the size of either would accommodate all who attend. This had long been perceived, but no remedy was practicable. The outbreak of war brought with it a sense of realities, a pressure of finance, and a need for reorganisation. The Rev. J. H. Shakespeare is President of the Free Church Council. For years he has meditated on the evils of disunion and concord. At the annual meeting he spoke his mind and spoke it plainly. He found an audience prepared to listen to him, and he outlined what he believed would be a great Free Church movement, that will

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preserve all the essential points of the denominations, but will at the same time provide common action and increased efficiency. Evidently he has in mind the American plan of Federation of the Evangelical Churches, by means of which overlapping is prevented, common action assured, and a better spirit fostered between all the Churches. Already a strong committee has been formed to consider the entire question, and all who love godly union and concord will rejoice if the deliberations will end in closer fellowship among those who hold the Truth in love.

A Possible Danger. In more than one quarter the advocates of Federation have expressed the conviction that the divisions among Free Churchmen decrease their political influence. Politics are not the end for which Christ founded His Church. Unfortunately, party spirit is not always synonymous with patriotism; it demands much less sacrifice, and is the pathway to much better assured notoriety. We do not believe it to be for the benefit of any Church, Established or Free, to be definitely allied with any political party. Party feeling impregnated with ecclesiastical zeal is apt to give birth to action the reverse of Christian, and to lead to language more spiteful than constructive. Social reform is one thing, party politics another; and the steady persistence of the Churches in one direction will do far more to advance real social reform than the proclamation from pulpit and platform that it is essential for all Churchmen or Free Churchmen to be attached to one or other political party. We remember the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes bitterly complaining that some of his friends had more enthusiasm for a certain political leader than for the Lord Jesus Christ. Individuals may be politicians of the party type and remain excellent Christians. A Church is different. It embraces men of all classes united for the definite object of worshipping God and extending His kingdom. As the virus of party politics works on its life the evil becomes more and more intensive. It leads to disintegrations, and those who remain become more pronounced in their politics and less definite in their Christianity. We trust we shall hear less and less of the Church in politics.

Evangelicalism A Church of England writer in the *Constructive Quarterly* describes Evangelicalism in England. his Church to a coalition of Traditionalists, Protestants, Evangelistic and Liberal Evangelicals. The older Evangelicals embrace the first two classes, many of the third, whereas the younger consist of the Liberal elements with a goodly number of Protestant and Evangelistic Clergy. Everything depends on definition, and as we read the article we are at once struck by the lack of clearness in his divisions and the way in which men are classified rather by age than by outlook. For traditional Evangelicalism among young men he has little respect; it may be pardoned to their elders, who have had their characters developed in its environment. Protestant Evangelicalism flourishes in a controversial atmosphere, and appeals to the "Bible only." As for the Evangelistic Evangelicals, "their influence is not so widespread as could be wished." The future lies with the Liberal section, who desire changes but are not agreed as to what they should be. They are more attracted to Evangelicalism than to any other type of Churchmanship. They are ready to accept new ideas, are more or less in sympathy with the "higher criticism," and "lay stress upon the necessity for the Atonement and for the 'conversion' of the individual." They are opposed to the inadequacy and negativeness of current Anglo-Catholic doctrine, and have no sympathy with the denial of the validity of non-episcopal orders or with the refusal of the titles "Catholic" and "Churchman" to a great part of Christendom. "Liberal Evangelicalism derives its inspiration mainly from the spiritual experience of Christian peoples." "Their message to modern Evangelicalism is the need for mutual charity and patient study of each other's point of view as the only preparation of a great forward movement by the Church in the days to come."

Does As we lay down the paper Evangelicalism we wonder what is Evangelicalism? Does it stand for a Temperament? any definite principles, has it any special hold on fundamental doctrine, or is it simply a temperamental attachment to a certain type of feeling or outlook? We are not of those who wish to see all Evangelicals

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conformable to the same cast-iron model. We believe in "private judgment," and are no foes to new knowledge from whatever source it may come. We are not, however, disposed to sacrifice the authority of the Bible to the claims of "new knowledge" that may not be true. We cannot abandon the clear teaching of our Lord and St. Paul in favour of current speculations as to what they would have thought had they lived in the twentieth century. It is certainly true that the bond which unites Evangelicals within and without the Church of England is a *spiritual* experience, and those who have had this experience recognise that they are one in Christ. The Lord is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." In Him alone we find the true and living way to God, and we cannot possibly sacrifice the supremacy and authority of the Bible as the final court of appeal in all matters of doctrine. In the article under consideration we find little mention of the Bible—it is incidentally alluded to, and no peculiar honour is paid to its place in Christian life and teaching. There is a vagueness, an indefiniteness about the whole article that is in contrast with the evidently Christian spirit of its author. In an age like the present something more is needed than "Liberal sentiment" and "Evangelical sympathies." Men call for bedrock Truth.

The Panama Conference. The great Conference held in Panama to consider religious problems in South America has given rise to a controversy that will have an influence on the religious life of this country. To-day, as never before, the principles that work in one hemisphere are sure to make themselves felt in another. The Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States has been divided on the duty of sending delegates to the Conference. One party, the Sacerdotal, contend that co-operation with non-episcopolians "would seriously reduce the clearness of the Church's witness to Catholic principles." To send representatives of the Board of Missions would help to delay the reunion of Christendom, for Rome is in possession of South America, and Rome resented the Congress. Edinburgh excluded missions in Christian lands from its considerations. On the acceptance of this condition certain Anglicans attended. The Panama Conference had no Roman Catholic members. It consisted of men who ignored, more or

less, Catholic traditions of jurisdiction; and Bishop Every was quoted as saying, "South America is without true religion." The Roman Bishop of Panama saw an anti-Roman animus, and protested against the holding of the Congress. The Board of Missions sent representatives. Some members resigned, and an agitation is threatened against those who hold that Church work among Roman Catholics is legitimate. It is sad that an effort to raise the spiritual status of South America should have this result; but it is an additional proof of the dividing line between sections of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States.

The Pulpit and the War. The Rev. J. D. Jones, of Bournemouth, has won the affection of many thousands. He is a truly Gospel preacher, who never hesitates to declare the whole counsel of God. He has discussed the duty of the pulpit at this time, and believes it to be the duty of the preacher to interpret the events of the day in accordance with the mind of God. The people think of the War; its problems puzzle and perplex them; their hearts are with their sons at the front, and the Gospel of God can alone sustain and comfort them during these trying days. Nothing but the assurance of a continued life in the many mansions can bring consolation to the sad and bereaved. This does not mean that we should glorify war or neglect the gospel of peace. No peace can be made until German militarism be broken, but no words should be used that will have to be repented of when the blessings of peace return to our land. The German Emperor has thrown against humanity the weapon he and his people fashioned through forty years of ceaseless preparation. Human civilisation has broken down, and we must set to work to build up Christian civilisation. "There was only one thing that could crush the passions of man, and that was the preaching to them of their common fatherhood in Christ." This is the right attitude. "In Christ" is the key to the solution of the perplexing problems of the future. The Christian people of this land must come back to Christ as their Lord and Master, as their very life, if we are to have the future secured from strife and sorrow. Have we yet learned the lesson that will make us fit to receive the blessing of peace?

World Missions and Unity.

Notes and Reviews.

The Bible Society's Work.

THE Bible Society is the handmaid and munition maker of all missionary movements. This year the centenary of the American Society is celebrated, and we learn that in its first five years it issued 139,881 copies of Scripture and Scripture portions. In its ninety-ninth year its issues amounted to 6,406,623 Bibles and portions. It sends out Bibles in more than 150 languages. The British and Foreign Bible Society has risen to its opportunities during the War. Since August, 1914, it has issued, in forty different languages, khaki Testaments, Gospels, and Psalters numbering more than 3,500,000 copies. It sends them even to the Indian soldiers imprisoned in Germany. In Berlin and Warsaw, in Salonika and Constantinople it continues its work, and in 1915 the Turkish agency distributed 95,000 copies. No Society has ever shown greater powers of adaptation to sudden emergencies, and we are convinced that real Christian unity can only be founded upon the devout study of the Word of God.

India and the War.

India has nobly responded to the call of Empire. A thrill of loyalty ran through her races, leading them to take their part in the great conflict. This was not due to any liking for English people in general; it was at once a spontaneous acknowledgment of the justice of British rule and homage to the ideals for which the Allies fought. Missions have had their part in the creation of this goodwill. Medical missionaries have won the affection of the people. The high character and devotion of the missionaries have impressed themselves on the minds of the intellectual upper classes, and their disinterestedness has won for them the respect of those who value profession by work done. It may be argued that Missions have only touched the fringe of the populace. That is true, but all educated Indians know well that the missionary efforts are the ex-

pression of the best religious life of England, and are an outcome of the spiritual fervour of our people. This means much in time of war. Unfortunately the War has summoned to our armies medical men who can ill be spared by the Mission centres.

Interned Missionaries. Christians always view with sadness any privations endured by those who are working for God among non-Christian people, and one of the saddest features of the War is the internment of missionaries. An Austrian writer complains of the contrast between the action of our Government on the West Coast of Africa and in India. In the former colony the Germans are permitted to work in freedom; in India and Ceylon and South Africa they are forbidden to do any missionary work, and are shut up in concentration camps.

The reason is plain. German missionaries in India have forgotten their position as guests and have become dangerous to the peace of the Empire. On the West Coast of Africa they are not of equal danger to British rule. As long as war lasts it is the duty of the belligerent Governments to take precautions against the abuse of liberty, and sad experience has shown that patriotic passion gets the better of Christian duty and leads individuals to think more of injuring their national enemy than of advancing the Kingdom of God. Missionaries should refrain from taking part in political action. If they do not, when war breaks out internment becomes necessary. The charges of cruelty against British Governors have all proved to be unfounded.

Missionaries. The National Missionary on German Council in India embraces Missionaries. Bishops, Episcopal and non-episcopal missionaries. It is the most representative body imaginable from the missionary standpoint. Its know-

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ledge of the field is unrivalled, and all it says deserves to be heard with respect. It boldly declares its dissociation from the reports that the German Missions had ulterior political motives. Their sole object was work for God among the Indian people. The members regret the interruption of fellowship through internment, and look forward to the resumption of happy relations in the future. In this co-operation alone lies the hope of reconciling the nations now at war. We are glad to read this testimony, and trust it will be borne out by investigation. Nothing would rejoice us more than to know that the German missionaries acted loyally by the country whose guests they were and refrained from intervening in politics. When this is manifest to the world there will be a great reaction in favour of the German workers.

The L.M.S. The London Missionary Society rejoices, and we rejoice with it. A great financial crisis had to be faced. Retrenchment seemed inevitable, and work long consecrated to the service of God was in danger of abandonment. Civil authorities and religious leaders joined in a strong plea that the labours of the past should not be lost in time of war. The appeal was blessed by God, and the danger has been averted. We are convinced that if the Christian world could only imagine or visualise what Missions are doing, the response financially and personally would be much greater than it is. We fail to understand because we keep our eyes shut. Christian Missions to-day are accomplishing a work that is truly civilising, for it leads the non-Christian world to see the ideal of the Cross, and to recognise that the missionaries believe in and follow a crucified Saviour.

A Strange Argument. An attack has lately been made upon Missions on account of the widespread decay of religion. Throughout all the world, among all creeds, a decadence of faith is observed. In India, China, Japan, in Africa, and in Europe the influence of faith grows less and less. There is need of a religious revival; but this revival, according to its advocates, should be a revival in every faith. The Christian Church should not strive to break down religious systems it deems false, but should concentrate in

strengthening the faith of its own adherents, and should endeavour to stimulate the great world faiths to do the same for their followers. Those who argue thus do not seem to have the least grasp of the fact that Christianity claims to be the universal religion, and that its Divine Founder gave the command to make disciples of all nations. To be false to this command means disobedience to a primary duty. We have, even among Christian people, a spirit that thinks lightly of truth, and only looks at apparent results. If a certain belief appears to be allied with devotion, all is well; its agreement or disagreement with the revealed will of God is a secondary matter. Loyalty to Christ demands adhesion to His teachings, and we cannot be false to Him.

Missionary Support in Other Lands. The returns of contributions to Missionary Societies in the United States and Canada show an advance of no less than 9.43 per cent. The total amount raised was in pounds sterling £3,758,000—a large sum, and a proof that missionary interest is keen. In Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, and Norway there is evidence to show that the War has increased instead of slackened missionary zeal. Neutral countries have their own burdens to bear, and it would seem that, meditating upon the world conflagration, they see more clearly the necessity of doing all in their power to spread the Gospel. Christianity has not failed. States have not tried to put it into practice, and their failure to do so is the real cause of the terrible conflict that surrounds us.

Swedish Missions. Sweden is a small nation, and is not rich; yet it has 400 missionaries at work in 111 stations. They are aided by 1,350 native workers among 22,247 baptised members. In China, Africa, India, and Turkestan its missionaries are found, and it has been made clear that as the kingdom has no colonies, its agents in the mission field cannot be engaged in any intrigues connected with the War. The Swedish Missions are of modern growth, but they have won the attachment and support of the mass of earnest Christians in the country. They are entirely the fruit of a movement springing from the people, and their mainte-

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nance is derived from a multitude of small gifts and not from large donations. There is a need of greater unity among the organisations, and in time this will be reached.

Opening the Buddha's Eyes. Nearly 1,200 years ago the Emperor Shomu of Japan conceived the idea of constructing a giant image of the Buddha, fifty-three feet in height, with a face sixteen feet high, and the eyes four feet long. When repairs have to be carried out in the Temple of Nara the lustrous part of the eye is symbolically removed, lest the image should be defiled. Then the image forms a soulless framework, and does not become an object of worship until the soul is restored to the idol by the ceremonial rubbing of the eye with a sacred writing brush. This ceremony took place last year, when tens of thousands of people assembled. A missionary among the crowd says it was remarkable for the "apparent absence of any real religious expression"; only a few, chiefly old people, as they passed the idol's temple, engaged in prayer! This sad spectacle only too faithfully reflects the spirit of Japan. The Gospel has only reached a small proportion of its inhabitants, and the need for their evangelisation becomes more pressing as its amazing advance in civilisation becomes more and more materialistic.

Unity in the China Inland Missions. The first Annual Conference of the C.I.M. in North Kiangsu was held last October. Representatives of different branches of the Church met together. Missionary and Chinese Christians joined in conference on equal terms, and the spirit of the Master was in their midst. The Conference was not large, but it represented a remarkable growth of vital Christianity. One brother present was the first convert in a district that has now a Church with 600 members and 1,000 enquirers. The subject for discussion was "A Constitution for the Churches," and although a scheme had been carefully drafted, the time proved too short to consider all its details, and the further discussion was deferred for a year. This in itself is a good sign. More than is generally believed depends on the terms of a Constitution. Amendment becomes more and more difficult as the years pass, and

every line deserves and demands the closest scrutiny. The China Inland Mission is the fruit of faith, and an outstanding witness to the fact that men and women whose hearts are placed in God can work together for His glory.

The Jew. It is probable that in Europe to-day the Jews as a race endure one of the greatest trials in their chequered history. The accounts that reach us from Central Europe are sad reading. Their future is obscure, but it would seem that in some quarters a better feeling towards them grows where least expected. The map of the world will be recast when peace returns, and the scattered race may have a great part to play in the settling of international feuds. Its headquarters may once more be Palestine, and Providence is calling us to teach them that their Messiah has come. In Great Britain the Jews have acted patriotically. They have done and are doing their part in the War, and if we are true to our Christian profession we shall be more eager than ever before to lead the Jews to the Cross. Britain has the proud privilege of being the land that has most realised its Christian duty to the Jews. We still fall very far short of doing what we ought to do for them.

The Land of Haiti is a land where Mystery and heathenism is rampant and Shame. savage practices prevail. Its voodooism is probably one of the most degraded of existing forms of religion, and gross superstition is rife. The United States Government has refused to renew the Concordat with the Roman Church, so the Government subsidy will no longer be available. Protestant Missions are on their trial. They have a unique opportunity of preaching Christ and extending their influence. The Wesleyan Missionary Society is the only English organisation at work in the island, and as the United States is the dominant power, missionary work will have more freedom. Unfortunately, confusion and unrest prevail; but the history of the Church shows that in these conditions God frequently speaks to men and leads them to the Cross. May this be the experience of this strange land of revolution, disturbance, and spiritual darkness!

World's Evangelical Alliance

(British Organisation).

Liverpool and District Auxiliary.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE annual meeting of the Liverpool and District Auxiliary of the World's Evangelical Alliance (British Organisation) was held on Tuesday, March 7th, 1916, at the Gordon Hall, Blackburne Place, Liverpool. The principal speaker was the Rev. J. D. Jones, D.D., of Bournemouth, who delivered an inspiring address upon the insistent call for the clear profession of true Christian Faith so urgently emphasised by the lessons of the War.

The meeting was largely attended, and was presided over by the Rev. Canon Howell, President of the Auxiliary. Among those supporting him were the Rev. James Mellis, the Rev. F. Linstead Downham, the Rev. Benjamin Bell, the Rev. Charles R. Green, the Rev. C. C. Lundie, the Rev. William Taylor, Alderman John Lea, and Mr. Thomas A. Leigh.

The proceedings opened with the hymn, "Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven," after which prayer was offered by the Rev. Benjamin Bell.

Mr. Thos. A. Leigh remarked that it was a great pleasure to be able to welcome Dr. Jones with such an influential gathering. They missed their late President, Archdeacon Madden. He had engaged to take the chair, but he had passed away from them, and his place was taken by their new President, Canon Howell. Canon Howell was Archdeacon Madden's first and only vicar. He had been a clergyman in Liverpool now for well-nigh fifty years, and they were very thankful to see him in their midst that day. At the committee meeting at which Canon Howell was elected it was decided that the office of President should be an annual appointment, by which step it was thought that greater interest might be aroused in the Alliance. Probably another year the office might be held by a Nonconformist minister. They wanted, as far as possible, to bring God's people together, to make them all realise that they were all one in Christ. They believed in Christian union on a Scriptural basis. There could be no true union apart from the Word of God. It was the Word of God which united them, and it was in the Lord Jesus Christ that they were drawn together and realised their oneness with Him.

For the last two years, ever since, in fact, he heard him preach in his own church, he had been trying to secure the presence of Dr. Jones at their annual meeting, and he had not let him alone until he had secured a definite promise from him. He was a very busy man, especially in his own denomination, but they looked upon him as belonging to all the Churches, and they were very thankful to see him amongst them. The more they saw of him, the more, he was certain, they would love him. Mr. Leigh appealed for any present who were not members of the Alliance to join. They wished to increase the membership, in order that there should be greater unity amongst Christian workers, for the more they could unite together, the greater the Lord's blessing upon them would be. There was some talk of a mission in the autumn, to be arranged by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He hoped the Nonconformists would have one, too. But what would be the use of a mission if God's people were not united? There would be no blessing result from a mission if the children of God were not at one heart and soul. They must love one another; they must get closer and closer together; they must have meetings for united prayer. It was through prayer that things were brought about: the Early Church was born at a prayer meeting, not at a Communion Service. They who loved the Alliance wished to see its prayer meetings multiplied, and Christians of all denominations thereby united together. He regretted that the Bishop of Liverpool could not be present at the meeting. No one had helped more than he in the work connected with the Alliance, having done all he could to help it forward. He also mentioned that the Rev. W. Talbot Hindley, one of the Hon. Secretaries of the Auxiliary, had now for many months been working with the troops, and had had to relinquish for the time being his secretarial work, but his colleague, the Rev. Charles R. Green, had ably discharged the duties.

The Rev. C. R. Green announced that letters of apology had been received among others, from the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Liverpool, the Bishop of Liverpool, Mr.

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Alexander Guthrie, Mr. Robert Gladstone, Sir Alfred Dale, the Rev. W. Talbot Hindley, Sir W. H. Lever, Bart., Archdeacon and Mrs. Howson, Mr. G. Oliver Jones, and Mr. James Hope Simpson.

The Chairman said it was with very mingled feelings that he occupied that position. It was a great pleasure to meet so many who cared about unity, and who were trying for the peace of Jerusalem. But there was also a feeling of sorrow, for they were met under the shadow of a great loss. He did not suppose any of them felt the loss of Archdeacon Madden so keenly as he did. It was his privilege thirty-seven years ago to bring him to Liverpool. The meeting might be interested to know what Canon Aitken thought of the late Archdeacon. He said in a letter: "Dear old Madden's home call has been a great blow to us all and a great loss to the Church on earth. He was a very unique man, and I am sure it will always be a cause of satisfaction to you that in the providence of God you were allowed to have so much to do with giving him his set-off in the beginning of his ministerial career. His genial humour and his unfailing kindness made him a general favourite, but I may say that he ever sought to use the influence thus acquired for the highest of objects. In no sense was he a popularity hunter, but a true lover of souls." As a young man Archdeacon Madden was a very devoted helper, a man possessed of very strong common-sense, and thoroughly attached to his work. In his parish, in which there were four thousand cellar dwellings—which he was glad to say an enlightened city had closed—he soon became very well known, and he was a great power for good. After leaving the parish he was for some time Metropolitan Secretary of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, and later he was called to St. Mark's, Barrow-in-Furness. He (the President), through visiting the parish, was able to bear testimony to the wonderful work carried on there, there being an immense Sunday school and Bible class, and large and influential week-night services. In 1889 Archdeacon Madden came to St. Luke's, Liverpool. The Archdeacon had not been long in the parish when Bishop Ryle asked him to accept a vacant honorary canonry. Mr. Madden would not accept it; he declined positively, saying there were men older and more experienced. Similarly when the Bishop desired to make him Archdeacon, he did not want the appointment, strongly advising the Bishop to appoint another man who would have been very generally acceptable in the diocese. But Bishop Ryle was firm, and he made no mistake. An Archdeacon had a great deal of secular work to do, and to show the spirit of the man, in 1904 he wrote to him (Canon

Howell): "Continue to pray for me, for in serving diocesan tables I dread losing my clear vision of my Lord." That was the man—devoted, walking with God, and anxious above all things to please Him and win souls for Him. Needless to say he always tried to do what he could for the World's Evangelical Alliance. He undertook a tour in Canada, along with Rev. Dr. George Hanson, a Presbyterian minister, and with good results. In one of the funeral sermons at Southport one of the preachers said: "His influence was drawing Church and Chapel closer together."

In introducing Dr. Jones to the gathering, Canon Howell said there were some clergymen whose influence were felt far beyond the denominations to which they belonged, and Dr. Jones was one of them. He had tea not long ago with a clergyman and a Baptist minister, and he found that the clergyman was a very devout admirer of Spurgeon, and that the Baptist minister was equally a devout admirer of John Charles Ryle, first Bishop of Liverpool, and with the outlook of those men most of them would be able to agree. Dr. Jones was one of those men, and so he had very great pleasure in welcoming him to address them.

Rev. J. D. JONES, D.D.,

who met with a very cordial reception, expressed his pleasure at being present at the gathering. It really was a sincere pleasure for him to find himself at the meeting. On the previous evening he was in Manchester at a meeting of the City Mission, a meeting similar in character to this one, although not in *clientèle*, at which the speakers were Prebendary Webb-Peplöe, the Rev. Dinsdale T. Young, and himself. Here again he found himself at a meeting at which the various sections of Christ's Church were represented. It did them all good to find themselves outside the affairs of their own denomination, able to look one another in the face and realise, in spite of the differences which divided them, how really there was a solid unity which bound them together. The report of the Manchester City Mission insisted upon the evangelical basis, and that its missionaries should be men of evangelical principles, and so at the meeting there were speakers representing different denominations. It made him feel that the evangelical basis was the ground for unity among the various sections of Christ's people. The nearer they got to our Lord and Christ, the nearer at the same time they got to one another, and it was a great delight to come to a meeting like this, over which a Canon of the Anglican Church presided and had ministers of various denominations supporting him and

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present. One realised that in spite of denominational differences, which he supposed none of them would be inclined to minimise, that, after all, they were all one in their faith and love for the Lord Jesus Christ. What he would like to speak about was this—they could not get away from the conditions under which they were met. One of his own deacons a few months ago advised ministers (but not himself) not to preach "war sermons." He did not know exactly what he meant; probably the deacon himself did not know exactly, but what he did know was that a man who could preach and ignore the great world catastrophe would be living in a balloon. He would not be preaching to the anxieties of his people, because there was scarcely a family into which the war had not come in one form or another, and scarcely a family which had not its lads in France, Salonika, or Mesopotamia, continually thinking of them; and a man in the pulpit who ignored that sort of thing in his preaching would be almost hopelessly irrelevant. He would not be preaching to the people in the pews; he would not be making that atmosphere in which they had now to do all their thinking and their interpreting of the Gospel. What he wished to speak to them about was the way in which the War was driving them back on the evangelical position. What he meant by the evangelical position was quite frankly this—he did not want to go into any dogmatic detail:—that the human race did not carry within itself the means of its own redemption; that if it was to be redeemed and saved, it must be through the grace of God in our Lord Jesus Christ. That was the essential in the evangelical position. They believed men could only be saved and redeemed through the working upon them and for them of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He wished to show how he thought the events of this tragic war were driving them back upon that fundamental position, the real evangelical position. He did not think it was a misstatement or a false presentation of the case to say that for the last fifty years there had been quite an opposite view to what they called the evangelical view prevailing amongst the people. Folk had had a sort of notion that human nature was essentially a good thing, and that if human nature got fair play it would develop naturally into the beautiful thing it really was. That was to say that human nature carried in itself the means of its own redemption, and if given fair play would blossom out into a full and complete salvation. These genial and rosy views of human nature coloured them like a stained-glass window, but it seemed to him that every shot that had been fired on the battlefields in Flanders had simply smashed

the stained-glass window of their dreams and had driven them back to the tragic view of human nature that they got in the Bible—human nature fallen and broken, and only to be saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. They had had this other view, a sort of humanistic view, the view that a man carried in himself the means of his own redemption and salvation; that man was essentially good, and that it was only adverse circumstances and the rest of it that prevented that essential and native goodness from developing itself. That was not a new view by any manner of means. It received a tremendous vogue from the doctrine of evolution, the doctrine that in the development of the world from the primeval slime to the condition in which we now are, all that had happened because of powers inherent in nature itself. That was not a complete account of evolution—he was aware—the popular conception was never complete; but people had the notion that by a steady and ordered and inevitable progress the world would gradually work itself towards the millennium. They had transferred all that from the realm of nature to the realm of man, although the transfer was absolutely unjustified. And so they got the notion that man, given fair play, would develop in much the same way, and the result was that they got in the Victorian era a sort of intoxication of optimism. Herbert Spencer, for instance, could say that the bigger man was inevitable, and Tennyson could write:

"Through the shadow of the globe we sweep
Into the younger day."

Human nature carried within itself the means of its own redemption, and all that was essential was that its own conditions should be found for it. They transferred, for instance, the scientific doctrine of environment to man, and they said that the evil that was in him was to a large extent the result of evil conditions, and, give the man fair conditions, human nature would reveal itself as the beautiful thing it was. So we got the movement for social reform, the whole social propaganda of the last fifty years. There was not a Christian person who was not thankful for the efforts of ameliorating the lot of our poor: with all that social propaganda they were in perfect sympathy, though they might not cherish the same extravagant hopes. That was the idea. Give a man his own house, a reasonable wage, and a reasonable amount of leisure, and the evil in him would be gradually worked out, and the good in him reveal itself as a beautiful thing. And in addition they said: "The only other thing we want is education and scientific culture." In the Victorian era it came to be said that if

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only life was scientifically organised we could get rid of suffering and pain and get rid of evil; between those two things, the pursuit of health and environment and the spread of education, we should see human nature develop into the beautiful thing it really and essentially was. All these people refused to accept any doctrine of a fall. Human nature was not fallen at all. It was not any less broken down. It had not developed itself, it was in process of growth; and if it only had a fair trial, a fair chance, it would gradually right itself, and we should gradually see the perfect man develop in that way.

Now what was the comment of this awful War upon that theory? Was he putting it too strongly when he said that the tragic happenings of the last nineteen or twenty months had simply smashed all that kind of thing to little bits, made it absolutely untenable? The tragic events of the last twenty months had shown that human nature was not the genial, gracious, beautiful thing that some had believed. The fact was that human nature, unregenerate, unredeemed until Christ came into it, was like every other bit of nature—it was wild. Nature was sometimes genial and gracious, but they must not, because of an occasional genial and gracious day, conclude that nature had forgotten how to be wrathful and cruel. They must not conclude that she was always gracious. Nature that was sometimes beautiful carried within her the possibility of storms, tornados, and earthquakes. Sometimes she let loose a devastating storm which would sweep a country and carry in its train a tragic toll of dead. She carried within her bosom fire which would overwhelm with destruction whole towns and great populations within a short space of time. Nature at times ran wild, and human nature was like nature until Christ Himself obtained a hold of it. Human nature sometimes ran wild; it was running wild just now. Think of the millions of men grappling with one another. We were back almost at the savage state. We were even told that in the methods of warfare we were back to the usages of many centuries ago. Human nature was never bright to look upon until Christ got hold of it. It could run wild and carry destruction and desolation all round. The War had disposed of a good deal of rather limp and mushy sentimentalism. There had been a good deal of that in their religion of the last twenty-five years; it had been of a genial and rosy nature; there had been very little of the tragic Bible element in it. The War had disposed of that; it had made it impossible. It had demonstrated up to the hilt the truth of the Bible view, that human nature is guilty, human nature is broken and lost. One of the

religious losses of the last twenty-five years had been the loss of the sense of sin. If there was no sin there was no need for a Saviour. We had been driven back by the tragic events of the last twenty months to this view of human nature as guilty and evil, with untold possibilities of wickedness wrapped up in it; and because human nature had revealed itself in that way as sinful and evil, we were driven back on the evangelical position, that if human nature was to be redeemed and saved, it could only be through Christ. Civilisation was in a state of collapse, and we had been discovering that the things that were to redeem us—better conditions, better education—were absolutely powerless. We might say what we liked about Germany, but he supposed that in no country in the world had life been organised as it was there. Science had had its fair chance, but as far as could be seen it had not done much to improve the moral conditions of the German people. Science had put more murderous weapons into the hands of the Germans, but he did not know that it had invented the spirit of murder. That spirit, as demonstrated in this War by the Germans, was invented by German hearts themselves. There was no race in the world better educated than the German race. They were so proud of their culture that they desired to impose it on everybody else; but neither their culture nor their science had redeemed human nature. In this War it was the most scientific culture in the world that had been guilty of a long catalogue of shocking crimes, worse crimes than any other country in modern history had been guilty of. The record of that cultured country was proof positive that these ideals were absolutely inadequate and helpless to redeem human nature, and that if we depended upon them we should never see what we wanted—the redemption of the human world. So here we were face to face with these things, these rosy and genial views which had been so prevalent, and not unknown inside the Christian Church. There was a particular American preacher who said that really if a man was well born the first time, there was no need for a second birth: eugenics were to take the place of the Gospel. A great London preacher said that self-improvement was salvation. That kind of thing was being held and preached, but out of evil God was bringing good to us, and out of the measureless tragedy and suffering of the present hour He was driving us willy-nilly back on the old Bible statement, that "Except a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." We were back there, and that was just exactly where the Evangel came in, where the essential Gospel came in. We saw in these days how absolutely hopeless it was to expect human nature to develop into

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goodness and purity and holiness, and how hopeless the prospect was for the world if it was simply left to the forces resident within it, unless there comes to us help and succour from God; there was nothing but despair in front of us. We were driven back once more upon the great truth, that God in Christ was reconciling the world to Himself, and that what science cannot do, and what education cannot do, the love and mercy of God in Christ, operating upon the human soul, can do. Philosophers and sociologists, and so on, had not been able to tame the wild passion of human nature, but human nature at the foot of Christ was tamed, and we were driven back to preaching of the Lord Jesus Christ as the one and only hope of the human world.

When they were preaching that they were not theorising at all; they were not speaking up in the air, they were speaking out of their own experience. There was an immense power within any Church which had discovered that the power of the Gospel resided in Christ, and in Christ as crucified, and the nearer they got to that central fact, the more power there was, the more redeeming and regenerating power, in their preaching. They could not go on with their preaching if they did not see that power exercised. He sometimes visited their Methodist friends, and a short time ago he was at Newcastle-on-Tyne at a meeting of the Central Mission. The Secretary read out a tremendous list of subscriptions, and frequently after mentioning a name he would say, "A trophy of this Mission," and "Another trophy of this Mission." He asked afterwards what this was intended to mean, and was told that the names were those of men who, having been victims of drink, were right down in the horrible pit when the Mission got hold of them, set their feet upon the rock, and they were now good men doing their best, by gift and personal service, to help to redeem and save their fellows. He did not quote that as being singular; he heard much the same at Manchester on the previous evening, the redemption of helpless, hopeless slaves of passion by the power of Christ. There was no case of sin that our Lord could not forgive; there was no man so low that He could not lift him up; it did not matter how low a man fell, underneath him still were the everlasting arms. As they thought of civilisation at this moment, the tragedy of the War, they were inevitably forced to the conclusion that the one hope of the world lay in the mighty Christ, and the one preaching that was going to be effective in the way of redeeming man and regenerating the earth was the preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He wished to say, and he said it in no carping or criticising spirit, that it seemed to him that the man or

minister who in the present state of things spends his time on little subjects did not know his business. Now was the time for big themes and big things. Our men at the front were face to face with realities. They did not want to hear those at home discussing denominational differences. What they wanted to hear was a Gospel that would help them to shoulder their burden, and help them to face death with cheerful courage and hope. If they were going to preach that song of the Gospel they had to get back to the central evangelical theme that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Those who had held to their belief in that, whilst a great many superior people had not, had all the facts of the case on their side just now. The War had cleared away a lot of sentimental genial optimism and brought them back again. He hoped it would bring back the whole Christian Church to the very definite and distinct preaching of Jesus Christ as the one and only hope of redeeming the world. As they got back to that central fact they would begin to realise that, after all, the things that divided them were as nothing compared with the great faith that united. The nearer they got back to that central fact, naturally the nearer they got to the centre, and nearer to one another, and he believed their real hope of unity lay in the World's Evangelical Alliance, the alliance of Evangelism. When they got back to the central things, when they stood in face of the Christ they leaned on, and in whom lay the hope of the world, then they would begin clasping hands with every other man who loved Him too. In the great Evangelical Alliance, an alliance of the Evangel, lay not simply the hope for the world, but the hope for the unity of the Christian Church.

Alderman John Lea moved a vote of thanks to the Rev. J. D. Jones. He said they were honoured by the presence of Dr. Jones and by his beautiful address, the effect of which would be felt not only within the Alliance but far outside. He had told them charming truths in a very able manner. As a member of the Liverpool Corporation he was able to say that that body had done as much as possible, perhaps as much as any other city, to improve the surroundings of the people. It had closed the cellar dwellings, removed insanitary property, and erected beautiful dwellings for the people. He was of the opinion, however, as many others were, that unless the people themselves be improved, the dwellings, the surroundings, however beautiful they be, would not do the good that they ought to do and which their designers had wished for. The appearance of the platform on this occasion was a reminder that they were all working together even though they had their differences. The

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thing was to keep their fences so low and the dividing line so restricted that they were able to shake hands across them with their neighbours at any time. The meeting had been greatly honoured by the visit of Dr. Jones, whom they warmly thanked for coming to Liverpool. He had imparted an influence that would be felt, and they would cherish affectionate memory of his visit.

The Rev. F. L. Downham, in seconding the motion, said he felt that he had intimate association with the World's Evangelical Alliance, having been for many years a member, and also having had the honour of being one of the local Hon. Secretaries, and as serving as a Vice-President at the present time. They had listened to a most memorable address, one to which they would be glad to recur in time to come, and one which was most timely. They thanked Dr. Jones with all their hearts, and trusted that the Divine blessing might rest upon him in his labours to spread the Kingdom of Christ.

The Chairman, in submitting the motion, said he most cordially associated himself with what the speakers had said. To all of them engaged in religious work the address to which they had listened, so eloquent, so simple, so beautiful, would be an inspiration.

The motion was heartily carried.

The Rev. James Mellis proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, remarking that Canon Howell was a veteran, but it was not every veteran that was able at his time of life to carry through the work of the President of such an organisation. It was inevitable that Canon Howell should refer to the late Archdeacon Madden, and he (the speaker) listened with peculiar interest to those personal reminiscences. As a Southport minister he would like to assure Canon Howell that he had not overstated the case when he said that Archdeacon Madden had reached a position when all denominations were beginning to look up at him, and clergy and ministers were feeling that he was a centre around which they could gather. They missed him very much at Southport, where he was a loss to the Church of which he was an ornament.

The Rev. C. R. Green seconded the motion, which was cordially carried.

The President, in acknowledgment, said he was glad that his was not a permanent office, and that next year they would have another President. At the same time he thanked them very much for the honour that the Auxiliary had done him.

The gathering concluded with the hymn, "My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine," and the Benediction.

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